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UNCLAS DUBLIN 000387

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: IRISH SKEPTICAL OF ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP IN GROUPS AT  
WIPO, ILO, UNEP, UN-HABITAT, AND CND

REF: STATE 35846

1. On March 31, Post delivered reftel talking points to Julian Clare, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) First Secretary for UN Affairs. Clare said that Ireland was

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skeptical of proposals for Israeli membership in WEOG groups at UNEP, UN-HABITAT, and the CND, as well as Group B in WIPO and the ILO's IMEC group. The GOI accepted Israel's conditional membership in WEOG for electoral purposes in New York, but did not view this arrangement as giving Israel rights in respect to regional consultative bodies. The GOI, moreover, believed it was crucial to maintain the distinction between the technical/procedural aspects of WEOG arrangements with Israel and the substantive/policy dimensions of deliberations in such bodies. Clare observed that granting Israel membership in groups at UNEP, UN-HABITAT, CND, WIPO, and the ILO would create a precedent for the erosion of that distinction. He also cited the GOI's view that the Asia Group would be the better fit for Israel, notwithstanding the history of difficulties with that possibility.

2. Clare said that Member State discussions on this issue continued, though the prospects for a consolidated EU position in response to USG demarches were uncertain. Without being specific, he noted that a number of Member States were predisposed to be helpful to Israel whenever possible. He observed that Member States aimed to approach the issue of membership in UN regional consultative groups in a manner that would not signal hostility toward Israel. He also commented that this issue "would be around for awhile" and did not appear at the moment to be particularly divisive among Member States.

BENTON